THE STORY OF TEDDY

By Helen Van-Anderson

THE
STORY *of* TEDDY

A BOOK FOR THE CHILDREN

By
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INDEX.

		PAGE
Chapter I.	How Teddy Learned to Remember . . .	3
Chapter II.	The Surprise Party . .	10
Chapter III.	The Crystal Truth Seekers .	21
Chapter IV.	"I Want to Love the Good" .	29
Chapter V.	Jack and Teddy . . .	36
Chapter VI.	The Naughty Thought . .	45
Chapter VII.	How Teddy Learned a Lesson .	52
Chapter VIII.	The First Visit to Charley Barber	58
Chapter IX.	What Teddy and Jack Did for Charley . . .	67
Chapter X.	Jack Stays Out all Night .	76
Chapter XI.	How Teddy Used His Motto, and What it Did for Him .	83
Chapter XII.	What Happened to Jack, Arthur, and Charley Barber .	90
Chapter XIII.	The Crystal Truth Seekers Make Plans	98
Chapter XIV.	What the Crystal Truth Seekers Did	105
Chapter XV.	The Picnic and What Polly Said	114

PREFACE

THE STORY OF TEDDY is based on facts of personal living and experience and is presented with a hope that it may be taken as a working basis for the management and government of children in every home where the book is read.

To understand that in every child is the seed of Divinity which needs but the right culture and environment to bring it to the beautiful expression of a noble character, is the foundation for true education.

The right culture consists in a persistent and continuous application and practice of the faith, that the good is everywhere present and waiting to be put into beautiful words

and actions by every one who loves it, whether child, man or woman. The right environment, is the opportunity to *choose* and the encouragement to *act* upon this principle, for when a child is shown a beautiful ideal, taught how to *love* it and *live* it, he becomes its embodiment as naturally as a seed becomes a flower.

As one who has had the sweet and precious experience of motherhood, and the satisfaction of proving the benefit of the motto, "*I want to love the Good,*" the *Story of Teddy* is lovingly sent forth on its mission to homes everywhere, by

The Author.

THE STORY OF TEDDY.

CHAPTER I.

Teddy sat upstairs in the play-room all by himself. He didn't really want to be alone, but his mamma had decided that it was best, so there was nothing to do but sit there.

His Robinson Crusoe lay on the floor, on its face, with its leaves all crumpled, and its back half off. His skates lay just where he had thrown them too, and his handkerchief had fallen on the floor in a discouraged little heap, but Teddy didn't seem to care. He sat in the highest chair he could find and swung his legs. His face was all drawn into curious puckers and wrinkles. Every few minutes his legs swung so hard they kicked against the

chair, but he didn't care. He sniffed too, in a thoughtless, hard kind of a way. He had forgotten that his handkerchief had dropped on the floor, or else he didn't care where it was.

He felt as if the sun had gone behind a big cloud, because he couldn't think of a single thing to make him glad. The only thing he could remember was the very thing he tried to forget; and that was, that he had been naughty to little sister Ruth, and he was now shut up in a room, instead of going off with the other boys to coast.

What had he done to Ruth?

He had taken Robinson Crusoe away from her, because it was *his*, he said, and he wanted his own things to himself; and then he had pinched her poor little ears till she cried!

Of course he was sorry and all that, just a minute afterward, but he didn't see the need of saying so. She would soon get

over it anyway, he thought, so he went right on looking cross, because he didn't want to change too quickly. Just then mamma came in, and she had looked at him in a real loving way, but as if she had overheard everything, and said: "You may sit here in the play-room to think awhile, Teddy, and to be sure you will know just what to think, I have written down some words for you to say over. Here they are: 'I want to love the good.' Be sure and say them over until you really feel like looking for the good everywhere. I believe it will be a good plan for you to say them over about two hundred times."

"And then can I go out, mamma?" he had asked.

But mamma only said, "We will see," and then she had gone out and shut the door.

Did you ever hear of such a thing? Mamma had never done this before. No,

and she never had looked so kind nor spoken so lovingly. Come to think of it, Teddy remembered that she hadn't even said, "You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Teddy Spring, you great ten-year-old boy!"

And that really would have been the worst thing she could say, especially since he was ten years old, for since then — about two weeks — he had been trying to be as much like a man as he possibly could, and men weren't shut up, and nothing was said about their age.

The sun shone on the snow outside, until it seemed as though a thousand diamonds flashed and sparkled, and the snow creaked and squeaked merrily when the sleighs went by. Teddy thought of his coasting again and swung his legs harder than ever. That knocked the slip of paper off his lap where mamma had laid it.

He stooped to pick it up. "I want to

love the good," he read. Huh! Didn't she know he loved everything good without making him say it so many times?

He didn't want to say these words a single bit, but then if mamma said so he must, he s'posed.

So he began rather slowly at first, but faster and faster as he went on. He would get through with it as soon as possible.

Pretty soon the sun shone brighter than ever. The diamonds looked like real rainbow splinters. Teddy's great St. Bernard dog, Jack, sat out on the porch waiting for Teddy. "Dear old fellow, he'd do anything for me," was the thought that flashed itself into Teddy's mind as he caught a glimpse of his playmate waiting out there so patiently.

A pair of snowbirds came and perched on the window-sill and chirped so cheerily to each other it made Teddy feel as if he would like to be a bird himself. After

they flew away he shut his eyes and began again to say his words over, but in the midst of it all he couldn't help thinking how sweet little Ruth was, anyway. How pleased she was to look at his pictures! And right then and there Teddy felt very much ashamed at the way he had treated her, and made up his mind never to do it again. He remembered how many nice things sister Kitty did to make folks happy, and as for mamma, of course *she* was good and he loved her. Then he went on with his words again. Over and over, "I want to love the good."

Presently he opened his eyes and happened to see the Robinson Crusoe book lying just where it was when mamma went out, and someway he felt like picking it up carefully and putting it on the shelf with his other books. Then he thought he might as well pick up the other things, and before he knew it the

whole room was in order. He had often heard papa say "order was heaven's first law," so it must be good too, and he was sure he liked to see things in order as well as mamma or papa.

"I want to love the good," he kept repeating, till all at once a great new thought came into his head. "I'll do it. I surely will! Oh, I do wish mamma would let me out," he exclaimed with the brightest eyes you ever saw, for what can make a boy's eyes, or girl's either, sparkle more than a good thought, I can't imagine, can you? Just then a tiny fist pounded on the door and Ruth's dear little voice said: "Mamma wants 'oo, Teddy. She's goin' to s'prize us. Come quick!"

Then, of course, Teddy had to open the door, and what do you suppose he did? Why, he just stooped down and kissed the little mouth.

CHAPTER II.

And then he looked around to see if anybody saw him, for one thing Teddy could not bear, and that was to kiss someone while someone else looked on, just as if he were ashamed to show his love! Did you ever see such a boy!

But Ruth never noticed his quick glance, and chattered away like a magpie till they got down stairs.

And there was the surprise! A roomful of the very nicest boys and girls Teddy knew, all sitting in a circle around the sitting-room, as if they were waiting for somebody. And of course they were. They were waiting for Teddy and Ruth, and when they saw them, they all began to smile and say, "How do you do."

At first Teddy couldn't say a word, but pretty soon he managed to say

"Hullo!" which was not very much like a party greeting, was it? And then he looked at his hands to see if they were clean. Alas, no! The dust and dirt on his playthings seemed to have been added to what had been on his hands before. He wondered if the freckles on his face covered up the dirt, for he often trusted to his freckles, instead of a good washing. For a wonder he was a little anxious this time for fear they did not.

Then he remembered that mamma had asked him to wash and dress himself before lunch, for she wanted him to look especially tidy; she had not mentioned why, and he had been so filled with plans of coasting that he had hardly heard; at least he forgot it right away, if he did, and now — well, here he was.

He guessed he would remember to keep "cleaned up" a little better after this.

Oh dear, he wondered if mamma

wouldn't make some excuse for him; but no, she never said a single word! Ruth and Kitty were both dressed in their second best dresses, with clean white aprons, and were as fresh as sweet clover.

Teddy knew he ought to get away somehow, but of all the excuses he ever made, he couldn't quite find one to fit this particular time and place. He didn't want to say "I forgot," because he hated to have all these boys and girls know that he ever did such a thing.

Of course this did not take half as long for Teddy to think as it has for me to tell it, so really he wasn't standing there but a minute or two, until he thought of a way to get out. He spoke up in a brave, gay tone: "Just go on with your play till I come back, then I'll show you some fun." And with a smile that promised something to come, he shot out of the door, feeling

quite proud of his success in excusing himself. Then if he didn't rush upstairs and get his face and ears washed and put on his other clothes in a hurry! Why, his fingers fairly flew!

Some people think boys don't know what hurry means! But they do, at least Teddy did. He washed his ears clean too. Oh yes, he knew how, well enough, although you might not always think so, if you looked at his ears.

He was all ready at last, even to his bright new necktie, which he tied in rather a stringy fashion, I must say, but it was the best he could do.

"Come here, Jack!" he called as he opened the outside door. Jack came immediately. "Now, see here, old fellow, you've got to help make a good time in there. I promised some fun to 'em, because I know what you can do. I believe in you, Jack. I've been thinking about how good you are, and now I want you to do your best."

Jack wagged his tail and spoke as loudly as he dared, for in the house he had been taught to use his gentlest voice. He said "yes," in dog fashion.

Teddy put a red Turkish cap with a long tassel, on Jack's head, with a rubber under his chin to keep it on, and took him in to the children. How they shouted and laughed when they saw Jack come walking gravely in on his hind legs! And when he went to each one and offered to shake hands they thought that the most wonderful of all.

Then Teddy laid a piece of candy on his nose, and Jack held it there until Teddy told him he might eat it, so he shook it off, caught it daintily as it came down, and ate it with as much enjoyment as Teddy might have had.

When the games began, mamma played with the children and was as jolly as any boy among them. Teddy was real proud of her, and he knew the

boys liked her. There was no question about the girls, but boys were hard to please, Teddy thought.

Before they went home they asked mamma for a story.

When she was ready to begin she took from the mantle, behind a tall vase, a lovely glass globe, clear as a drop of dew. Teddy thought it the largest marble he had ever seen, and wondered why mamma had not given it to him. But presently she began to talk.

"I am going to tell you the story of The Crystal Globe," she said, "and if you can understand it, you may believe it as a true story. It is not this globe, although when you see this one, it stands for the one I shall tell about. Do you see how round and perfect and clear this is?" and mamma held it up so every one could see it.

Oh, yes, they could see that, and Teddy began to ask mamma where she

got it, but she put her finger on her lips and he knew that meant "keep still."

Then she held the globe so the light shone on it, and it looked like a rainbow ball. They all thought it very beautiful. "The globe I speak of, is like this in its nature but not in its outside form," mamma went on, when they had admired it a long time.

"It may be round because it may be perfect. It may show the colors of the rainbow, because when the light strikes it, it answers back by shining and all the beautiful colors come out. Everybody in the world may have this Crystal Globe if they really want it enough to work for it, and you know whatever is worth having, is worth working for. I am sure Teddy thought so about his bicycle, didn't you, Teddy?" asked mamma with a smile.

"Guess I did. Glad I worked for it too, 'cause if it would 'a' been mine by papa giving it to me, it's all the miner when

I earned it myself," and Teddy swung his legs with satisfaction to think how he had put the chairs up to the table morning, noon and night, and run errands for mamma those three months.

"The name of this globe is Character," said mamma again, "and the name of the light is Truth. Now, character means all the thoughts and words and acts that make up our everyday living, and whoever has good thoughts and acts has a good character, a round character. Whoever lets Truth shine on him, by doing what Truth tells him to do, is a shining character.

"Truth means all that is good and true and beautiful. When I saw this lovely globe I thought how I would like to find the globe of character in myself, and I am trying real hard to find it and let it shine."

Mrs. Spring looked all around the circle of eager faces.

"Wouldn't you like to join me in this search, for you know really I am a little child in my heart, as much as any of you, because I am willing to learn, and don't you think it would be nice for us to have a little circle of Crystal Truth Seekers?" Everybody smiled and nodded.

"What does that mean, mamma?" asked Teddy before anyone else spoke.

"It means hunters after clear Truth. Crystal means clear, clean."

"I'd like to," said Teddy again, feeling that he would like to learn anything mamma did.

And then they all said they would like to belong to the Circle, and see if they could find the Crystal Globe. Mamma promised each one a beautiful ball like the one she had in her hand, so they could have it to look at and help remember what they were working for.

Just then Jack began a great barking outside. He had slipped out of the front

door when Sarah opened it to take in a parcel.

"Oh, but he's got his cap on!" cried Teddy as he rushed out, followed by all the rest.

Jack had something to bark at, that seemed certain, for he stood by the woodshed and barked as if the top of his head, with its cap and bobbing tassel, would fly off.

CHAPTER III.

"I do believe it's my little Maltie, Jack's after!" cried Mollie as they ran.

"Huh! What if it is? Cats can run faster'n dogs!" said Teddy. "Besides, it's only his way of having some fun."

"But Kittie don't like that kind of fun," persisted Mollie tearfully.

Sure enough, it was Maltie, as they all saw, when she suddenly rushed from under her prison and across the snowy lawn, Jack after her in close pursuit, his tasselled cap bobbing up and down as he ran.

"Oh, do stop him!" sobbed Molly. "Catch her, Jack!" "Sic!" cried several boys in chorus. Teddy was laughing and shouting with the rest. Of course Jack was only in fun, and anyway the cat could run up the cherry tree, he thought, as Molly's sobs grew louder. "That's right!

S—s!" he shouted, as Jack made a desperate lunge after the flying gray fur.

And then, all of a sudden, Teddy stopped. Something said itself in his mind. It was just what he had repeated so many times that very morning. "I want to love the good."

And here it came again! Very queer, but — "Here, Jack! Come here to me!" Whenever Teddy spoke in that tone Jack always obeyed. It didn't always mean that Teddy was cross, only that he was in earnest.

Jack knew the fun was over for this time. He went slowly up to Teddy with his tail down, and looking as if he begged somebody's pardon.

Teddy took off the tasselled cap. "Now, Jack, we're going to stop this: change right 'round from west to east. Do you understand?"

Jack wagged his tail faintly. He and Teddy always understood each other.

"That means," went on Teddy, "that we're not going to have fun that isn't fun for *everybody*, cats as well as dogs. Now go and shake hands with Mollie!"

The whole group gathered around Teddy and Jack. Mollie had stopped crying, and when the dog solemnly put up his paw, she looked into his eyes and said, "It's all right, Jack, I know you didn't mean any harm."

Then they all laughed, for it seemed so funny. "Whoever heard of talking to a dog like that?" cried Willie Morris with a scornful voice.

Teddy cast his eyes around the circle. "Jack understands every time," he said, looking at Willie longer than the rest. "And now, Mollie, I'm going to do as well as Jack and shake hands too."

And then he walked right up to her before all of them, and offered his hand. It seemed the hardest thing he had ever done in his life. It was even worse than kissing

Ruth. But somehow he felt like doing it, and all the time that little whisper went right on in his mind, "I want to love the good," and seemed to *push* him into acting as if he really meant it, which he did.

Mollie could do no less than shake Teddy's hand as heartily as she had Jack's paw, and when Teddy said, "Let's act like the Crystal Truth Seekers right now," she quite agreed, as did all the rest, that this was the very time to start.

A moment later and the little gray kitten nestled in her arms. Teddy had climbed the tree himself, and coaxed the little thing down.

They went into the house again, and while the visitors were putting on their things to go home, and as they stood around the large hall, Teddy said what was on his mind.

At first it seemed as if a big lump were in his throat, but he choked it down with a very large swallow. Jack was close beside

him, as he always was, and Teddy began by saying he thought Jack ought to belong to the society too, because he was very sure that Jack wanted to do the right thing, which was as much as anyone could do, to begin with. "Of course Jack doesn't always know exactly what he ought to do, and so he expects me to show him or tell him, but when he knows, he does it, don't you, Jack?" Jack thumped the floor gently with his tail and looked knowingly into Teddy's face.

"So if I belong, I think he ought to," added Teddy, gaining more courage as he proceeded.

"You'll have to be pretty good yourself, Ted," said Arthur Brown, who was a year older than Teddy.

"I know it," replied Teddy with a flush, but there's one thing we can promise, we won't run after cats nor make little girls cry, will we, Jack?" at which Jack forgot where he was and barked out a very loud "No!"

Teddy half expected Arthur Brown to laugh at this, but he didn't; instead, he said, "Well, it *isn't* kind to chase things and scare 'em. I'll train Pry not to run after cats either, but I don't know whether he'll mind as well as Jack."

"I expect he'll watch what you do. That's what Jack does," said Kitty with a wise little nod.

"It will help us remember better if we think somebody's going to act like us," said Donald.

"I want to love the good," exclaimed Teddy, suddenly. It had said itself aloud this time. Teddy was quite as startled as the rest to hear his own voice speaking up so bravely. "Yes, I do," he added, determined to stick to it now.

"Every society has a motto; this is short, why can't we have this one?" asked Marcia Bean, who belonged to the King's Daughters.

Why not! They all agreed that it was

the best that they could find; then Teddy with a great burst of confidence told them how much good it would do to say it over and over. "I know I said it 'most five hundred times, this morning!" he exclaimed. "Somehow it just loosens up all the good thoughts that have been frozen in,—kind of frozen, I mean, something like my sled when I left it on the ice that melted and then froze again," he added modestly.

He did not know his mother could hear every word he said, nor how glad she was to hear it. She was in the library behind the curtains, and so Teddy could not see her from his place in the hall.

"Yes, and while I was saying this motto, I thought of something to do for Charley Barber!" Teddy went on, anxious to make the most of his opportunity.

"I know him. He's that little boy in the window where the flowers are, and he's been lame a long time. Has a sore

on his leg where it was hurt once," said Arthur.

"That's the one, and he can't run and play like we can, and I just wish we could get up a party or something for him."

"May be we can," said several little girls in a breath.

At this moment the doorbell rang with a loud, long tinkle.

Teddy opened the door. There stood the grocer's boy from the store around the corner.

"Mr. Hale wants to see you right away, Teddy," he said.

A red, red wave of color shot over Teddy's face. He felt like running away, but he didn't do it. He only said very quietly, "All right, I'll come," and nobody knew how his heart beat, and threatened to jump right out of his mouth.

CHAPTER IV.

It seemed to Teddy as if the boys and girls never would go; but they did at last.

Teddy drew a long sigh, as he put on his cap and overcoat.

"What do you suppose Mr. Hale wants to see you for, Teddy?" asked Kitty wonderingly, as she patted Jack's head and looked into her brother's face.

"How do I ——" began Teddy crossly, feeling exactly as he had when he took "Robinson Crusoe" away from Ruth, but he didn't go on. He stopped, looked at Kitty about long enough to count ten, and said in a voice that he meant to have very firm, "I — I'll go and see what he wants," and then he and Jack went out together, and straight to the woodshed. They went in and Teddy shut the door.

Teddy had something on his mind. He sat down on the chopping-block and Jack went up and laid his head on Teddy's knees, looking up into his face with bright, loving eyes.

"See here, Jack, we've begun all new, but I don't know just what to do. You see, some of us boys were out with our bean-shooters last night, and, of course, I didn't quite mean to, but — but Jack, I hit Mr. Hale's window, and — well, we ran home together. Don't you remember? Yes, and that's why I ran, though maybe you didn't know it before."

Jack lifted his ears, and opened and shut his mouth thoughtfully, still gazing into Teddy's eyes.

"Now I don't want to be a — a sneak, and — well, *you* know, Jack, I do want to do the right thing."

Then Teddy was still a long time, such a long time that Jack concluded to say something himself. So he said "Boo!"

"Yes, it's all right. I've got it, old fellow," cried Teddy. "I've been saying over my motto, and I do b'lieve that kind of opens a door, somewhere, for it makes me know just what to do. Come on, Jack! We'll go to Mr. Hale and tell him all about it; and maybe he'll feel better when we tell him it's the last time we'll take that bean-shooter out of the woodyard."

Then Teddy sprang up with such a shout that Jack really thought something dreadful had happened, so he shouted too, in real dog fashion.

They ran a race to the gate; and anyone to have seen them would have felt like running and shouting too, for there was so much delightful frolic and life in the way the two comrades enjoyed it. Joy is catching, you know.

The sun had just gone to bed, and the sky hovered over, like a beautiful pink and blue quilt lined with rose-leaves. Long, pale blue fingers stretched away to the

east, where the stars would shine a little later. Teddy thought the air had never seemed so fresh, nor the sky so beautiful. Everything seemed so friendly, somehow. Teddy had never noticed before, but really the very creak of his shoes on the frosty walk was a song of cheer and enjoyment. The houses, the gateposts, and even the chimneys, as he passed, seemed to have an interest in him.

"Hurrah, Jack!" cried Teddy, swinging his cap; "I'm so full of happy, I'd like to jump over the moon, wouldn't you? There! get down now, and don't eat me up! Here we are; go in like a man, now."

Mr. Hale met them very crossly at first, but Teddy's bright face and brave words soon softened him. It really seemed as if the wrinkles just melted out of his face; and when Teddy said, "I'll bring you all I've got in my bank (though it isn't much — only seventeen cents), and as soon as I can earn the rest, Mr. Hale, I'll bring it to

you." Mr. Hale looked at him with a warm smile, saying, "That's the kind of a boy I like! Good for you, Teddy! You can pay it whenever you want to, and I'll hire you to do some errands for me if you want to earn some money right away!"

Teddy was so surprised and delighted he almost jumped up and down right then and there. Jack wagged his tail as politely as he could. That was all he could do. Can even a dog do more than the best he knows?

When they started home again, Teddy said, as they took a short-cut across lots, "I'll tell you, Jack, I'm glad we did that; I feel lots better than when I ran and hid under the woodpile, the day I knocked Mr. Rine's hat off. My! but we'll show 'em, won't we, Jack, what it is to *do* as well as talk? Mind you, now, you're not to chase cats!"

Of course Jack understood! Wasn't his motto the same as Teddy's?

After dinner was over and little Ruth tucked away in her snowy bed, mamma called Teddy into the library and told him how she had overheard what he had said about helping Charley Barber. She said the next evening Teddy might invite the Crystal Truth Seekers to meet in the library and talk over their plans, and that she had something to say, after she had heard what they really thought of doing.

"I'm so glad my boy is learning how to be happy and wise and well; for now he is learning the greatest secret in the world — the secret of being good by loving the good," she said in a queer, choky voice.

She kissed him twice when she said good night, and somehow, Teddy could feel the kisses for a long time after he laid his head upon the pillow. He didn't seem to want to forget them, as he usually did.

That night he dreamed that he saw a large, beautiful, pale blue panel on which were the prettiest white lilies he had ever

seen, and these lilies on the blue ground were placed so as to spell the motto of the Crystal Truth Seekers.

"I want to love the Good," read Teddy in his dream; and then it seemed as if every lily bell began to tinkle and ring with the words, till the whole room was filled with their music.

CHAPTER V.

Long before the company came the next evening, Teddy was ready. This time his ears were as shiny as a pink seashell, and as clean. Ruth and Jack had watched him as he washed, and Ruth declared, in answer to his question, that his ears were as "kean as mamma's soap." And if Ruth, with her earnest brown eyes, failed to see the faint grimy line that crept under Teddy's chin, or merged into a freckle on his cheek, it was because she, as well as Teddy, was so intent upon clean ears, that she quite forgot the need of a clean neck.

As for Jack, he may have thought very wisely about the beauty of having everything match — clean face, clean ears, clean neck and all, but if he did he never mentioned it. He never even hinted to

Teddy, that to think of nothing *but* ears would be apt to make him forget neck and nails; that to be clean and rosy in one part and not all parts, would make him lop-sided like a tree that has grown crooked. Oh no, Jack never said a word about it, but he was certainly very loving when Teddy stooped down and said, "See if I'm clean."

What did he do? Why, he just leaped up and put his paws on Teddy's legs and almost kissed the soapy ear (dogs have a way of kissing, you know). Then he said "Boo!" in a soft, loving voice, and Teddy understood perfectly.

When friends love each other like Teddy and Jack, they always understand each other. It doesn't matter what words they speak, or whether they speak at all, they just *know* that love is at the bottom of everything; and they can feel it all the time, whether they hear or see it at all. So Teddy knew that Jack

meant: "You're trying to be clean, Teddy, and I love you for trying." And Teddy straightened up and scrubbed harder than ever. When he was ready, he and Ruth and Jack went down to the library and waited for the Crystal Truth Seekers. Kitty was there already.

By and by the whole rollicking, merry set were laughing and stamping on the porch. Teddy let them in, and then they had to have a tag and a laugh all around, but at last they were settled in their seats and ready for business. They asked Teddy's mamma if she wouldn't say something first.

When she began, everybody was as still as a mouse. The ears and feet and hands all attended to their own duty, and just at that moment their duty was to keep still.

It really seemed, mamma said, as if they must already have had a glimpse of the Crystal Globe hidden away in

their hearts, so brightly did its rainbow beauty flash out in their eyes, and smiles, and thoughtful actions.

A smile went around the circle when she said that, and Teddy felt like jumping up and saying "Hurrah!" but he was learning that one thing a Crystal Truth Seeker ought to do, was to keep his feelings from running away with him.

Besides that, he must set a good example for Jack. If he suddenly shouted "Hurrah!" Jack would be pretty sure to say "Boo!" Another thing, it might disturb the meeting. So there were three good reasons why he smiled instead of shouted.

And as he sat there, listening, a new thought came to him; it was this; a smile is as good as a word and sometimes better.

Then mamma gave each member of the circle the crystal clear marble she had promised, and with it the loveliest

little yellow satin bag, just big enough to hold the marble, and on the bag, in tiny white letters, she had painted, "I want to love the Good."

So then they had a badge and a motto. You may be sure that was a happy moment for the Crystal Truth Seekers, and each one made up his or her mind, that every hour in the day he or she could wear that badge truthfully, which meant that they could truly say, no matter what they were doing, "I want to love the Good."

"Now you may each tell your plan of helping Charley Barber," said Mrs. Spring, after the cunning badges had been pinned on, and the excitement had quieted down a bit.

Nobody said anything for several minutes. Each seemed to be waiting for the other.

Even Teddy felt bashful.

"Boo!" said Jack suddenly, looking up

into Teddy's face and then around the circle.

They all laughed. "That's so, Jack," replied Teddy. "If we've got anything to say, we might as well say it. *Sometimes* a word is better than a smile," and he rubbed his biggest freckle with his forefinger, in a fit of absent-mindedness.

But it was only a minute till he thought of Charley, and then he forgot all about being bashful. "He hasn't any father and his mother has to make shirts for a living, but she keeps Charley's room just as bright and pretty as a flower garden," he began. "But anyway Charley's lonesome, 'cause he said so once when I went after some shirts, and so I thought and thought about him that day — you know when," Teddy faltered at last.

"Yes, 'n' you said maybe we could have a party for him," interposed Mollie, wishing to hear the plan.

Mamma says we can do something bet-

ter than having a party. We can take turns going to see him, and read or talk or play with him, and tell him about our s'ciety and everything."

"Oh yes, and *he* can be a Truth Seeker, too! I know he'd like to!" cried Kittie with real joy.

"'N'when the flowers come out maybe we can have a party after all," added Mollie.

"I think it's better to string out the good time than to have it all at once. That's the way we King's Daughters do and we never want to stop," said Marcia Bean. She was older than any of the rest, and they thought she must know.

They were all to go the first time, for a kind of a call, and Teddy was to introduce them. They felt that it would be easier than to go singly. After that Teddy was to make the first visit. "Yes, Teddy and Jack," added Mollie, "'cause Jack's in it, you know."

"Pry's getting pretty smart, too. I believe he'll do to go with me," said Arthur.

"Well, I shall take Maltie," was Mollie's fond assertion.

"My dollie wiz weal hair, and sunshine laugh, she tan do sometime, too," lisped Baby Ruth, clasping her dimpled hands earnestly.

"Bless the darlings! Planning to share their dearest joys with the lame boy," thought Teddy's mamma, as she took Ruth upon her lap.

"Oh my!" Look at Jack!" cried Mollie. "What has he got in his mouth?"

CHAPTER VI.

And what do you think it was? One of the little yellow bags! Jack had found it under a chair, and was carrying it straight to Mrs. Spring. "Oh! Oh! Jack wants a badge, too!" shouted the children, in the wildest glee. "Of course he does; and he will have it too, though this bag was intended for someone else; but she can wait for another," said mamma, with a knowing smile.

Then she took the bag out of Jack's mouth and tied it to his collar, at which he wagged his tail, and said as plainly as a dog could speak, "Thank you!" "Hurrah! now Jack's one of us, sure," cried Willie Morris, dancing about in regular Indian fashion. "Yes, and ——" began Arthur. But just then Mrs. Spring broke into the talk by saying, "Now, children, we'll have

half an hour for recess. I'll be blinded, and catch every blessed one of you — if I can."

She whisked the chairs out of the way, and the children into a circle, and before they could get over their delighted surprise, they were all ready to play blind-man's buff.

And such a romp as they had! Mamma Spring was just the mamma to believe in giving boys and girls a good time, and she could give it, too! The delighted whispers and loving smiles, every time she came near, were proof enough of that.

Jack was as happy as the rest. He showed his appreciation by being willing to do what he could to add to the fun. That was his way of loving the good. He walked around on his hind legs, bowed, and shook hands, and spoke a piece, — in fact, did everything Teddy asked him to, without whining or refus-

ing a single time! Wasn't that splendid Crystal Truth doing?

"There's one more trick you've never seen Jack do," said Teddy, with a fond look at his dear playfellow.

"Oh, what is it? Please have him do it for us," they all clamored. But just as Jack was ready to go through his performance something happened.

The electric light went out! First there was a choroused "Oh, my!" then a low but unmistakable giggle, then a great shout of delight; for the light flashed up again, and in place of the closed folding doors leading into the dining-room the children saw a snowy table just loaded with good things waiting to be admired or eaten.

There were lovely sprays of lily of the valley in shining crystal vases, cunning orange baskets filled with orange ice, great rosy-cheeked apples, and raisins and nuts and candy, plates of snowy

sandwiches, and in the midst of it all, right in the center of the table, was the biggest, prettiest, jolliest cake you ever saw! It was covered with orange icing, and in the center, in white letters, was the motto of the Crystal Truth Seekers:

"I WANT TO LOVE THE GOOD."

"Oh, Oh, Oh!" cried ten delighted tongues, and "Oh, Oh, Oh, Oh!" sniffed ten approving noses, and "Oh, Oh!" sparkled twenty shining eyes! Teddy was a little late; nobody had missed him, but during the darkness he had slipped upstairs, and when he came down his face was very red and shining, but very clean even under the chin. While they were playing blindman's buff, and he was near the looking-glass, he had caught a glimpse of his face. That was what sent him flying upstairs the first chance he had.

As they sat down to their lovely feast a sneaking little thought crept into his

mind. There is no need to tell what it said, but it said enough so that for a few minutes it seemed to Teddy as though the light was dim, and the apples sour, and the cake bitter, and the lilies all withered. Strange about those little sneak-thoughts, isn't it? Sometimes they do a great deal of damage. I have even known them to cause dear little boys and girls to break their playthings or dishes, and say naughty words to mamma.

Better turn them out, you say? Well, I should think so. Teddy had not opened his mind door very wide, so this little sneak-thought didn't get in very far before the boy looked at the motto on the cake, and then everything was all right again — for awhile.

Then he saw for the first time that papa was at the table with them; and he was so glad, because of course everybody would like his papa, especially when they saw what wonderful things he could do, and

how much of a boy he could be! That was the kind of a papa to have, Teddy thought with pride, as he looked over the table and asked for another sandwich; but — and he had to right then and there stamp his foot softly under the table and say under his breath, "I want to love the good," in order to drive out that same little thought that would poke its head in again! Queer, wasn't it?

But they had a splendid time. Everybody got a nice piece of the cake with plenty of frosting on it, and Willie Morris said it was really the best frosting he had ever tasted.

Mollie took a nibble and said it was even better than her birthday cake, but she was going to save her piece for Charley Barber. Then Mrs. Spring said she would have a whole cake made for Charley on Monday, the day they were to make their first call.

They all clapped their hands at this, and

thought it a capital plan, "'cause it'll kind of introduce us to Charley," said practical Mollie.

The evening was over at last. On Monday at four o'clock they were to begin the Circle work in earnest.

And after they were all gone, and Jack on his rug for the night, and Ruth and Kitty safely tucked in bed, Teddy went up to his own room.

His face did not look bright. Instead, it looked dark, as though a gray cloud had spread all over it. He said good night to his mamma in such a doleful voice that she went up to him, after he had gone to bed, and gave him an extra kiss. The cloud burst, at least it must have done so, for Teddy began to cry just as hard as he could cry.

"What is it, Teddy? What are you crying for?"

But Teddy only cried the harder.

CHAPTER VII.

Mamma got up to leave the room, saying very quietly, "Cry as long as you want to, Teddy; you know all about it, so you know just what to do." She was at the head of the stairs, when she heard a stifled voice from under the bedclothes calling "Mamma!"—"Well, dear?"—"Wh-y—why—di-dn't you tell me I hadn't washed clean?" with a loud sob.

Ah! the naughty little thought had wedged its way in, gone clear through the house, and now sprung boldly out of the front door! (The house was Teddy's mind, his mouth the front door.)

"Why didn't I tell you, dear child?" answered Mrs. Spring. "Because I wanted to teach you to rely on your own true self, your own memory, not mine. After I talked to you as I did the last

time, and you still forgot, I thought this would be the best way to help you. Don't you think it will, darling?"

No answer but a continued sobbing under the bedclothes.

"Di-d — did — you — see that dirty line under my cheek?"

"Yes, dear."

"Boo, hoo, hoo, hoo!"

"Teddy, mamma loves you very much; that is why she helps you; and love always helps in the very best and wisest way. Cheer up and be my dear, bright boy again. Then you will love this good thought of mine, that is kinder than any other, because it teaches you to depend on yourself. I will leave you now to seek for the clean, crystal truth about it." She pulled the sheet away and kissed the warm little face on the pillow.

A gentle scratch on the door, and the next minute in walked Jack. Could he stay downstairs when his dear Teddy was

crying upstairs? And when Jack came up to the bed, the very first thing Teddy saw was the little yellow bag. Yes, Jack's badge! And when he saw it he leaned over and put his arms around Jack's neck and cried afresh. But this time it was more of a sorry cry than a selfish one.

Mrs. Spring kissed Teddy, patted Jack, and went out of the room.

"I'm glad you've come, Jack, and glad you wear the motto. It helps me," whispered Teddy a moment later. And then he dried his eyes and thought it all over. He drew his knees up in bed and rested his head on them, as he looked at Jack.

"Why, I wasn't loving the good; that's what's the matter!" he burst out all at once; and Jack roused out of a doze and pricked up his ears with surprise that Teddy hadn't known that before. "Huh!" continued Teddy, "I might 'a' known mamma would do the right way,

and o' course she had to do *something!* Now I'm going to turn right 'round and say my words. Forgot 'em long enough!"

Then Jack heard Teddy's words, and helped say them too, as well as he could with his silence. "I won't be a forgetter nor a grumbler; I *will* see only the good side o' things. I *can* love the good. I *want* to love the good. I don't care if they did see that streak. It didn't hurt me a bit. It only helped me to have 'em see it. I *will* love the good; I *do* love the good. Yes, Jack, I do truly now, and I am going to tell mamma so, too!" And the little white-robed figure jumped sturdily out of bed and pattered into mamma's room, to say in a low, smothered voice, as the head rested on her shoulder, "I'm all right again, mamma. I've been saying my motto, and — and it's true."

"Bless you, Teddy boy! I know it." Mamma held him close, and kissed him three times. Then he scampered off to

bed with his face a perfect blaze of sunshine. (Heart sunshine is just as bright at night as day.)

Jack was happy because Teddy was, and of course they had to have a little confidential talk about the matter. Teddy talked and Jack listened; but it was all the same. They were both of one mind. When mamma went in, half an hour later, the friends were sound asleep,— Jack on the rug, and Teddy curled up close beside him with his head on Jack's shoulder.

At four o'clock on Monday afternoon Charley Barber looked out of his window and saw a group of boys and girls, two dogs (one big, yellowish-brown one, with a white ring around his neck, and one little black one, with brown legs, and brown spots over his eyes) and a cat (the cat was carried by one of the little girls). They turned in at his gate and started up the walk toward the door.

His mother was out, so when he heard

the rap on the door, Charley called out, "Come in!" and in walked the whole crowd, dogs and all!

"Hullo, Charley!" began Teddy, with his hat in his hand.

"How are you, Teddy?" answered Charley wonderingly.

"We've — we've brought you a — a birthday cake. It'll do even if it isn't your birthday, we thought," said Teddy, as Marcia Bean stepped forward with the cake.

"But it *is* my birthday!" cried the delighted Charley, "and mamma's gone out now to get me a new plant for the window."

"Oh, how nice!" exclaimed the girls in chorus.

"And this is Marcia, and Arthur, and Willie, and Kitty, and Donald, and" (naming the rest), continued Teddy, feeling it his duty to make a personal introduction, though it was one of the hardest things he ever did.

"Yes, and we thought you'd like to know all of us, so we could come to see you every week," added Mollie, holding Maltie up for him to see, and forgetting, in her excitement, to say that it was only one at a time who intended to come.

But Teddy explained more fully. "You see, Charley, we thought maybe it's kind o' lonesome for you sometimes, and we could make it pleasanter for you; and we've all come today to get acquainted. Here, Jack, come and shake hands."

Jack marched forward and solemnly lifted a paw.

"He's my partner, you see," added Teddy.

"We're all partners an' we're all hunting for something," interposed Kitty

wishing very much to have Charley know about the Crystal Truth Seekers.

Then Teddy commenced and told Charley all about the C. T. S., and what they stood for.

"I'm real glad you've come; but I can't play with you very much. I——" began Charley, with a bit of sadness in his voice.

"Oh, but Jack and Pry and all of us, we're going to 'muse you, 'cause you *can't* play like the rest of us," said Kitty earnestly.

"Yes, Pry will do his share," remarked Arthur proudly, with his hand on Pry's head.

"What can *he* do?" asked Willie Morris, with a challenging air.

"What can he do?" repeated Arthur. "Why, he can do a good many things. He can play hide and seek, and chew gum, and roll over, and——"

"My mamma thinks it isn't nice to chew gum," said Mollie, smoothing Maltie's fur tenderly.

"Well, it don't hurt if dogs do," said Willie Morris.

"But they don't do such things unless they are taught; and I really think the Crystal Truth Seekers ought not to chew gum," Marcia Bean said, standing by the table where she had put the cake. "Our society of King's Daughters don't."

"I'd like to see Pry roll over," suggested Teddy at this critical juncture.

Arthur called the dog out on the floor in front of the waiting group.

"Now, Pry, lie down and roll over. Quick! quick! Roll over now, or I'll have to get the whip!" he commanded in a threatening tone.

The little brown legs and plump black body rolled over three times, to the great delight of the children and the terror of little Maltie, who tried her best to escape from Mollie's arms.

"He'll do first rate," concluded Willie Morris, generously forgetting the question he had asked a few moments before.

Charley leaned back in his chair and laughed till the tears came. "I'm so glad you can bring him," he said, "because it really helps my leg when I laugh, and — and I haven't laughed this way for ever so long."

"Well, you'll like Jack. He can do things, too," asserted Kitty, determined to present Jack's claims as an expert in fun making.

"Now do you want to see him play hide and seek?" questioned Arthur after the noise had subsided somewhat.

"Yes, yes; let Pry play hide and seek."

But Pry had a mind of his own, and all the coaxing and bribing and threatening went for nothing. Arthur was obliged to give it up at last. "You little scamp! I'll box your ears then," he said, giving Pry such a slap that the dog howled.

"Why, Arthur!" said Marcia Bean, "You ought not to do that. It isn't kind nor right."

"No, nor 'tisn't loving the good," criticised Donald severely.

Jack walked across the room to Teddy, and put his big head, with the loving brown eyes, close up to Teddy's face, and Teddy understood that he wanted to go home. "I know it's time. We'll go pretty soon, Jack," answered Teddy; and then he caught sight of the little yellow bag on Jack's collar again. Kitty saw it at the same time. "My!" she whispered to herself, "it's a good thing I saw it in time. I was just going to scold Arthur."

"I believe," began Teddy, looking hard at the yellow bag, "that when we love the good it makes us love everything, and see good everywhere. Just to say the words over makes me see it. Why, I could even see it in a streak o' dirt the other night!"

Teddy didn't mind the laugh that followed, and he was determined it should

not keep him from saying what he wanted to.

Then he told them about that naughty thought, and how it came storming out into naughty actions, just because he didn't melt it away with the right words. "And Jack — why, he helps me right along, he's so loving; and then — well, of course I love him. Yes, and I believe that's why he learned his tricks so easy."

Arthur Brown scowled crossly. "What are Teddy Spring and his dog, anyway? Nothing but a pair of silly geese, always cackling to hear their own voices," he thought bitterly. "Pry is as smart as Jack any day, and a great deal prettier." So when Teddy patted Jack, and repeated that it was because of the love that the tricks had been learned so easily, Arthur sneered and said: "Humph! you think you're smart, don't you? Jack learned his tricks just as Pry did,— by knowing

he had a master, and one that can box his ears, too!"

For an instant Teddy's eyes flashed and his cheeks flamed. He felt like saying or doing something dreadful.

But wasn't Jack standing there beside him, as much insulted as he, and did Jack get angry? Not at all. He was not even disturbed, but stood looking into Teddy's face, drawing his breath gently through his smiling lips, and wagging his tail softly, as much as to say, "Never mind, Teddy, that doesn't hurt us. *Nothing* can hurt our feelings!"

And all the time there was the badge on Jack's collar right before Teddy's eyes, on which he read "I want to love the good." And Teddy shut his eyes a minute and said it over a few times.

"I knew he couldn't say anything," sneered Arthur again.

Teddy turned to Charley: "Would you like to have me come this time tomor-

row? 'cause they said I should come first; but I don't care, Arthur can be first if he wants to."

"You can count me out, I'll not come at all," was Arthur's sulky reply, as he pulled Pry toward him by the nape of the neck, and rose to go.

"Now, Arthur, I wouldn't say that," said Marcia Bean reproachfully, trying to detain him as he passed her.

"Maybe you wouldn't; but I would. Ted needn't think he can run me, for he can't. I'll not belong to your old Circle any more, either!" And he banged his hat over his eyes and flew out of the door, dragging Pry with him.

Kitty began to cry, and Mollie gave her the kitten to comfort her. But Teddy spoke up in a brave voice: "Never mind, girls; it's all right. We'll keep on thinking our motto, and let him come back when he wants to. We have started out to help Charley. Let's think of him;

only we mustn't stay any longer now. Good-by, Charley; I'll be here tomorrow; and here's a book mamma said I could leave for you."

He hurried them away so carefully and quickly and cheerfully, they hardly thought of Arthur again. But Teddy did, and long after he got home he stayed out in the woodshed with Jack, thinking it all over.

CHAPTER IX.

"It seems to me, Jack," said Teddy at last, "that Arthur was real mean. He slammed things around and acted awful; and I just wish he would be nice to Pry. Poor little dog! he does the best he knows, and he does as well for Pry as you do for Jack; but——"

Jack couldn't think what made Teddy stop so suddenly, and clap his hand over his mouth as if he were burnt; but what Jack didn't know, perhaps I can tell. A sweet little fairy of a thought crept into Teddy's mind, and this is what it said: "*Think love thoughts of everybody.*" And all at once Teddy realized that he had been talking about Arthur in the wrong way. So he clapped his hand over his mouth to keep from saying any more.

Presently he concluded he would forget Arthur and Pry by saying his motto. Somehow that always righted matters. Back and forth across the woodshed floor he paced, Jack close at his heels. Suddenly he heard someone calling "Teddy! *Oh*, Teddy, where are you?"

It was Kitty's voice. Teddy ran to the door and looked out.

"Here I am," he said.

"Just now," panted Kitty, as she ran toward the door, "Arthur Brown went past our gate and — and I was standing there and he made a face at me, and called me a good-for-nothing girl!"

"What did *you* do, Kitty?"

"I said he was a good-for-nothing boy! mean thing!"

"Huh! Kitty, what made you say anything? The way I did when he talked that way to me at Charley's, was to just say my motto over a few times, and then I didn't care what he said; and I've been

saying it now, to keep from thinking about Arthur and Pry."

"I forgot to say my motto," said Kitty, hanging her head.

"Well, come in here with Jack and me, and we'll say it together. I tell you, Kitty, we've got to love Arthur, or not think about him till we can."

"But he's a ——"

"Now, Kitty, that isn't ——"

"I don't care!" snapped Kitty; but she was sorry the very next minute, and she began, with Teddy, to say the words over and over.

When the bell rang for supper they went in with faces bright as sunshine, and Jack's eyes were surely as bright as the piece of looking-glass Teddy flashed in his face sometimes.

So the real work of the Crystal Truth Seekers was begun. When Teddy and Jack went to see Charley Barber the next day, Teddy found it a little harder to talk

at first than he expected it would be; but after a story or two from "The Cup Bearer," which Teddy had taken along to read, the ice was broken and the two boys and the dog got along together famously; for of course Jack listened to the stories as quietly as Charley. He never interrupted once, nor asked Teddy to read over again, nor criticized the stories, nor made a noise while the reading was going on; neither did Charley.

But when Jack was doing some of his funny tricks, right in the midst of them Charley stopped smiling, and put his hand on his lame leg as if it hurt him.

"What's the matter, Charley?" Teddy asked, quick to notice the change in the little boy's face.

"N-nothing, only my leg's got one of its hurting spells. 'Twon't hurt long, I guess;" but Teddy saw the lip quiver, and he felt very sorry, as he told Jack he needn't do any more just yet.

All at once he thought of something. One day when he was lying on the old lounge in the dining-room, all doubled up with stomach-ache, his mamma had told him to say certain words. They were these: "I am perfectly well and happy, because I am God's child."

Teddy remembered just how his mother had explained why he should say these words, and why, if he said them over twenty-five or fifty or a hundred times, he would be all right again. He remembered how quickly the pain went away, too. Why couldn't he tell Charley about it? And in less time than I have taken to tell you about it, he was saying: "Charley, I believe I can tell you something that'll help your leg."

"I wish it could be helped," said Charley in a faint voice. "The doctor says it ought to 'a got better long ago, and I don't see why it's so long getting well."

Teddy told his experience. "It helped me right away," he added, "and I'll tell you what mamma said was the reason it does good to say those words. She said the trouble with people having pains and things to bother 'em is because they forget to think 'bout God being so good and so powerful and so loving, and around us all the time. And she said if we'd just stop and think about how well and happy we ought to be and are, 'way down in the real of us, we could truly say we were God's children all the time; and if that's so, why you know, Charley, we must be perfect, and of course we'd be like what made us; and God's every speck perfect, and in every speck of the whole world at the same time, every single minute." Teddy said the last in a low, earnest voice, with great conviction.

"Let's say it, then," whispered Char-

ley; "'cause that pain in my leg's dreadful! Oh, dear!"

Teddy started it, and Charley joined in as well as he could.

For several minutes nothing was heard but "God's child is perfectly well and happy every minute."

Then there was silence, and Charley leaned back in his chair with closed eyes.

Just as Teddy was wondering how much longer it would take, Charley opened his eyes and said in a delighted voice: "It's all gone now, Teddy, as sure as—as anything!"

"It is! My! But of course it had to go when we talked so hard the other way. Now, Charley, just remember that, for another time."

"I will, Teddy," said Charley softly.

A few minutes later Teddy and Jack had to go; but they left a very happy boy behind them.

"I believe we'd better go around by Mr. Hale's store, Jack. Maybe he can give us a job to-night. You know we've got to earn that new window-pane, and it will take more work than we've done yet."

Jack was willing, of course. Did he ever refuse to do what Teddy suggested, if it was right? "My! Jack," Teddy continued, "it's just the very best fun I ever had to go and see Charley Barber; and how happy he was when we came away!"

They went on until they came to the store. Mr. Hale was glad to see Teddy, and told him to come over before school in the morning, as there would be something to do then.

Teddy said, "All right, sir," and walked out, feeling as happy as a prince. Just before they turned the last corner, going home, they met Arthur Brown.

"Hullo, Smarty!" called Arthur as

they passed, and he struck Jack with a little switch he had in his hand.

In an instant Teddy forgot everything but that insult to Jack.

He flew at Arthur like a wild thing.

"You mean old sneak!" he screamed, raising his hand. But something kept him from striking.

CHAPTER X.

It was the same little fairy of a thought that had come gliding into his mind the other time. It came now just before his hand reached Arthur's face.

It said, "Love thoughts, Teddy, think love thoughts of everybody!"

Such a gentle, sweet, loving little voice, too, as this fairy had away down there in Teddy's heart chamber!

He couldn't help hearing it, and the minute he heard it his hand dropped.

"I — I'm sorry I said that, Arthur. I do love the good in you; will you forgive me? I'm *sure* Jack forgives you!"

"No, I won't, and Jack's the ugliest dog in this town! Pry and I both hate him and you too!" And then Arthur ran on as fast as he could run, with Pry at his heels.

This seemed a worse insult than the other. "'Tisn't so, Jack," sobbed Teddy heart-brokenly, "you're *not* ugly and he knows it! Oh, dear, and I got mad, and now I oughtn't to belong to anything! O-hoo-hoo!"

But Jack never minded what Arthur said the least bit. All he cared for was to comfort Teddy. Every few minutes he would leap up and look lovingly into Teddy's eyes and lick his cheek. This was his way of saying, "There, Teddy, we don't mind what *anybody* says. We'll keep on loving just the same. Dear Teddy, think of the right side, not the wrong side. Remember what you told Kitty last night!" As he leaped up to talk this way Teddy caught sight of the little yellow bag fastened to his collar. There was the motto again! "I want to love the good."

"O-hoo-hoo! But I don't!" sobbed Teddy, and by this time they were right

there by the home gate and mamma came running out to see what was the matter, but Teddy wouldn't say anything till they went into the house, and then he told her all about it. His mamma said very much what Jack had.

"It only makes you grow, Teddy, to have these little troubles, and as soon as you begin to take things right, you don't mind what happens," she said.

"But I would like to have him treat Jack better!" persisted Teddy, drawing a long breath.

"Yes, dear, but even that can be laughed away. Just see how well Jack takes it."

"I know it."

Presently Teddy felt enough better to go out in the woodshed, his sure place of refuge when he wanted to be alone and have things out with himself. Of course Jack went too, and of course the two comrades had a good talk together.

"But the worst of it is, Jack," said Teddy, "I forgot and said things! Why, I wouldn't have done it for anything, and you know how I hate to do things those old sneak-thoughts tell me to do! And then to see how grand you could be through it all, when you were the one he hurt ——"

Just then Jack wagged his tail, as much as to say, "Why, I *wasn't* hurt, Teddy! Do you suppose when a thing isn't true it can hurt me? Now of course maybe Arthur thinks I'm ugly, but I don't *feel* ugly and I do feel loving, so what's the difference *what* he thinks?" And Jack got up and offered his paw to Teddy for a shake, by which he meant to show his state of friendliness to the whole world. "Oh, yes, I know, you dear old Jack, just how good you are, and I'm going to be just as much like you as I can, too!"

Teddy laid his head on Jack's neck and thought silently for several minutes.

The woodshed door opened softly, and Mrs. Spring looked in. "Come, Teddy boy," she said, "it is time for the wood to be brought in for the night. You must not forget to make each moment as perfect with the doing, as the planning of what to do. Time for everything and now is wood time. Jack will go after the mail while you do that."

She kissed the little brave but freckled and tear-stained face, and Teddy went to his work cheerfully while Jack but waited for the basket, and trotted off down to the postoffice, as he did every night. When he returned with his basket half filled, Teddy was all ready to sit down and read the continued story in St. Nicholas in which he was so interested.

After supper he took up the magazine and began reading again. The story was more thrilling than ever.

It was not until early bed-time that he looked around for Jack, who was usually close by his side.

Kitty said Jack had gone out when papa came in, and that was an hour or so before.

This was something new. Teddy went to the door and called him. No answer and no Jack.

It was a cold starlight evening, and Teddy could not understand how Jack could choose the outer cold to the inner warmth, but as there was nothing else to do, he finally concluded to go to bed and leave his father to let Jack in as soon as he arrived.

"As quick as you hear him scratch on the door, papa, just let him in," he directed for the third or fourth time before he disappeared for the night.

CHAPTER XI.

Teddy awoke the next morning with the brightest morning sunshine pouring right into his face. He rubbed his eyes confusedly. What was the reason it seemed so still, he wondered. And then he raised up and looked around for Jack. *He* must have slept late too.

But Jack was not there. Then Teddy remembered that he had been out last night when he came to bed. Hadn't he come home at all?

Teddy was wide awake enough now!

He hurried on his clothes and rushed downstairs just as the last breakfast bell rang.

"Oh, papa, didn't Jack come in last night?" he asked breathlessly, forgetting to say good morning to anyone.

"Steady now, Ted. No, Jack has not appeared yet," replied papa, looking up over the newspaper he was reading.

Teddy began to cry.

"Tut, tut, child, that won't bring him back. Be a man, anyway, over this. Jack will be back all right," said papa encouragingly.

"Yes, Teddy, you want to get the better of yourself this time," added mamma. "Now, don't worry, just go right on with whatever comes first and be true to your motto."

Breakfast was first, of course, but Teddy did not eat much, although he choked back his tears and choked down his cakes. Then he remembered that he had to go to Mr. Hale's store directly after breakfast. He half thought he would not go at all, and then he changed his mind. Jack never shirked anything, and Jack was honester than anybody, thought poor Teddy, as he took a bite and swallowed it the wrong way.

Then he choked, of course. Kitty pounded him on the back and Ruth said "Oh, my!" and after a little he was all right again.

A few minutes in the woodshed where tears and mottoes got rather sadly mixed, and Teddy went to Mr. Hale's.

The first thing he did was to inquire about Jack. Yes, Mr. Hale had seen him going home with the basket of mail, but that was all.

Of all the things Teddy had ever done in his life, that were really and truly hard, this was the very hardest. To stand there behind the counter, and count paper bags, big and little and medium, and put each one in its proper pile, was a task that was almost too much for him, but he had started out determined to be faithful to every single thing as it came along, just because that was the right and only way to love the good, mamma said, and because — yes,

because that was the way Jack did things.

Mr. Hale was so pleased with the way he worked, that he gave him a quarter instead of the dime he had promised, which Teddy was of course glad to get; but he would have been gladder still if Jack had only been with him, and he told Mr. Hale.

There was only time for him to run home to see if Jack was there, and around a square or two, when he found he was not, before it was school time. Two big tears rolled down his cheeks as he finally turned off to go to the school-house, but they were brushed away very quickly and no others allowed to take their place. There was no time for tears now. The motto was all he could attend to, so he said it over and over as he went along the frosty walk.

Was school easy, do you ask? No, indeed, it seemed fully as hard as paper

bags, even harder to think of, because it would last so long.

No Jack at noon either! Because Teddy had been so faithful and patient all the forenoon Mrs. Spring said he might be excused from school at afternoon recess and spend his time looking and inquiring for Jack.

The time came at last, and Teddy began a thorough search. All over the town, which was not very large, he tramped, peering, looking, asking for the big yellow dog with a white and yellow face and a white ring around his neck. But nobody had seen him.

By this time it was nearly six o'clock. Teddy had all he could do now to keep the tears back, but he was doing his best to be brave.

All at once, as he was passing a house with a fancy iron fence around it, a little dog came bounding out to bark at him. It was too dark to see very well (in

winter it gets dark by that time, or before, you know), but in a minute Teddy knew by the sound that the little dog had got its head caught fast in the fence.

He stopped to help the yelping little creature get free. "Why, I do believe its Pry!" he exclaimed a moment later, when he stooped down and spoke to the dog, remembering at the same time that this particular fence belonged to Arthur Brown's father.

Then he loosened the little round head, and Pry was so glad he crept under the fence and into Teddy's lap, and Teddy told him the whole story.

"Oh, Pry, can't you help me find my dear Jack?" he asked at last, as though the dog could understand as Jack always did. "He's so good and kind, and we're both trying so hard to love the good, and to do just the right thing at the right minute, and — and we do love each

other so — just as you and Arthur do. 'Course you know, Pry, I could get along without Jack if I really *had* to, but — but I don't feel like it, and, oh, I do want him so much!"

A few tears escaped this time, but Teddy brushed them off the dog's head, saying in as steady a voice as he could: "S'cuse me, Pry, I didn't mean to cry on you, but I do wish you could tell Arthur how sorry I am that I was so naughty to him yesterday!"

What was that thumping, beating noise on the sidewalk, as if a hundred muffled feet were running for dear life?

CHAPTER XII.

Ah, you have guessed, haven't you? Yes, it was Jack. He rushed down upon Teddy like an avalanche, scaring poor Pry almost out of his wits; but Teddy? No, indeed! He knew that step too well. and when Jack fell upon him they almost devoured each other.

"Pry, come here!" That was Arthur's voice, and Teddy in his joy forgot everything but the gladness and love in his heart. "Oh, Arthur!" and then he stopped, wondering what he should say next. To his surprise Arthur answered, and in the dim light Teddy could see the form and hear the footsteps coming closer. "Teddy," said the voice faintly, "I'm the one to ask forgiveness. I took Jack home and locked him up in our barn — I — know it was mean and hateful, but that's

the — the kind o' thoughts I had, and — and they just came out. Do you s'pose you can take me and Pry back to the Circle again?"

"'Course we can, Arthur!" said Teddy heartily, "and I'm just the gladdest boy that ever lived, I do believe, 'cause I've just wanted you to come back all the time!"

Then Arthur went in and asked his mother to let him walk home with Teddy, to which, after a few questions and answers, she consented, and two happier boys and two jollier dogs you never saw than these same boys and dogs who walked along in the starlight that lovely winter night to Teddy's home.

As they walked, of course everything had to be told and retold, and though Teddy asked no questions Arthur told how he had heard Pry yelping, and how he had run out to see what was the matter, and had overheard Teddy tell Pry all

about Jack's loss and everything. "And when I heard you say how hard you were trying to love the good, and that you and Jack loved each other like me and Pry, I just couldn't stand it and I sneaked over to the barn and let Jack out. I didn't expect to keep him more'n an hour longer anyway, but my! I'm about ten thousand times happier than I was before," he concluded, with a sigh of relief.

"Well, you can just b'lieve *I'm* glad," exclaimed Teddy. "I guess the two happys put together makes a bigger lot than when they're alone in one little streak!" in which bit of sound philosophy Arthur agreed.

Arthur left him at the gate and went home running a merry race with Pry.

And Teddy? Well, of all the warm welcomes a boy and a dog ever received, surely the one given to Teddy and Jack was the warmest.

"Oh, oh! goody! Jack's got home!"

cried Kitty, rushing to embrace the delighted Jack, who bounded in with paws and mouth and tail in use all at once.

"Oh! My! Jat's dot home!" echoed little Ruth, retreating to mamma's arms as a safer refuge than the middle of the floor where this whirlwind of joy might sweep her off her feet.

"Hullo, Jack, old fellow! Where did you find him, Teddy? asked papa after the breeze had subsided a little.

Such a story as Teddy had to tell! and such interested attention as everyone gave to his words, and to Jack's antics, for Jack seemed doing his best to supplement all that Teddy said.

As mamma kissed Teddy good night in his own little room, when they two were alone, she bent down and said softly: "Ah, my Teddy boy, you have gone a long way today in your search for the Crystal Globe in your heart, and I am sure you will find it if you keep on this way."

And Teddy had looked up wonderingly, and asked: "How can you tell, mamma?"

"Because you are willing to learn how to put self out, and let love in. It is your willingness to learn, Teddy boy, that counts, and then willingness to keep on using what you learn."

And as Teddy thought about it, after his mother had gone, he called this the hardest but the happiest day of his whole life.

Everybody was glad to see Arthur and Pry back in the Circle again, and from this time the plans were carried on all through the winter and spring. The visit to Charley Barber was the one thing they would not give up for any other pleasure, and could not be tempted to forget. When the appointed hour came it found Teddy, or Arthur, or Donald, or Kitty, or Mollie, or Marcia, or one of the others on the way to Charley's.

And Charley? Why, he grew happier

every day, and as he grew happy, his leg grew better. At first he could only sit in the chair or hobble about on a crutch, but it kept getting better, and one day in the midst of one of his best stories (for that was the one thing he could do in return for all the various kinds of entertainment the others furnished, and he did it well, and with all his heart too)—one day, I say, in the midst of one of his best stories, he stood up on both legs! He had forgotten all about being lame (the story was about a boy running a race with another boy), and there he stood for nearly a minute on that leg that had been lame for so many months!

"Why, Charley, you're well!" gasped Teddy, for it happened to be his turn that day.

"I've been looking for this, Teddy," replied Charley in a low, hushed voice, as he wiped his face with his handker-

chief, and then felt of his leg to be sure he was not dreaming.

"You have!" exclaimed Teddy, forgetting all about the story in his excitement over the lame leg turning into a sound one.

"Yes, I've said those words you told me about (you remember, don't you?) every single day, morning, noon and night, and sometimes kept it up for ever so long at a time, and other words have come to me, too, and — and well, Teddy, I couldn't help believing that some day I'd walk."

Charley put his handkerchief to his face, and was silent.

Teddy felt very still, too. It seemed as if the Heavenly Father were right there with them, and, oh, how very kind and great the Presence was!

"You see, Teddy," began Charley after a time, speaking very softly, "I've learned to think about God as Love, until it

seems as if the — the Love, I mean — is right with me every single minute, and sometimes I can almost feel It, loving and holding me, but that is when I've been thinking a long time about It, and such times I've just felt sure I'd be well some day, and now, oh, I'm so glad, I want to say a great, long, deep thank you! Yes, to say it right out to the dear God, I *know* is Love."

CHAPTER XIII.

One day Marcia Bean came to talk over a plan with Teddy.

"There's that real poor family, the Mooneys, down on Pine street, by the old mill. The mother is sick, and the father has gone away, and the children can't go to school because they haven't any clothes," she began, after greeting Jack and Teddy, whom she found out in the woodshed, "and I've been thinking maybe our society could take hold someway and help."

"'Course we could," responded Teddy promptly. "Why, we could each of us earn some money an' put it together, 'n' I'm sure 'twould do something."

"Well," went on Marcia thoughtfully, "I don't know what we could do, but I'd like to help, and ——"

"I'll tell you what!" cried Teddy, giving his knee such a tremendous slap that Jack woke out of a sound nap and barked as if the house was on fire. "Let's call the Circle together and talk about it, and each one promise to earn something!"

Marcia thought this a capital plan, and that very afternoon after school, the Crystal Truth Seekers came trooping into Mrs. Spring's library to "have a confab," Teddy announced to his mother as she opened the door.

She smiled lovingly on the little group and listened to the plan and its many additions.

"Why, this is a circle of Truth workers as well as seekers," she said, patting Willie Morris' curly head, as he, with sparkling eyes, volunteered his services to teach the littlest Mooney girls their letters.

"I tell you, Johnny Mooney needs a new hat, 'cause I saw the top of his head sticking right through the rim of his old

one like a—a hen's topknot when the wind blows," said Donald, looking around without a smile, "and I'll help to earn some money for him," he continued.

"I will too!" "And I," "And I," cried each in chorus.

"What'll we do?"

This from Arthur, who had been rather doubtful on this point.

"Oh, we'll—we'll sell eggs or something," ventured Donald, forgetting that possibly there might be no eggs to sell, as at Easter, when his mother allowed him a certain per cent on all he could find.

"Let's keep it a secret how we earn the money, and have a telling party at the last," exclaimed Marcia Bean enthusiastically.

Wild applause greeted this suggestion, and many mysterious nods, smiles and muttered whisperings proved how hard it might be to keep the secret.

"How much money do you think it will take to clothe the Mooney children?" asked Mrs. Spring, when the commotion had subsided somewhat.

"We ought to have three or four dollars anyway," ventured Teddy.

"Oh, my! it'll take ten or twelve dollars, 'cause my new suit cost five," said Willie Morris with a wise nod.

"Well, how many children have you to work for?" continued Mrs. Spring, wishing to give them some idea of the undertaking.

"There's Lizbeth Ann, she's four, and the littlest twins, Joseph Henry and Patsy. I guess that's all, 'cause the four oldest get along somehow by working out, only it seems too bad they never can have anything pretty," said Marcia Bean, who seemed ever ready with practical information.

"Perhaps you can help them, too," said Mamma Spring very thoughtfully.

"At any rate, I suggest that you have a month to work in, that you each try to earn a dollar or more, and that a month from today you all come here and tell about it."

Great applause greeted this proposition.

"In the meantime," mamma continued, "we will all make it a point to call at the Mooney's, and do what we can in other ways."

"I'll be the teacher for Josephine and Lizbeth Ann," cried Willie Morris.

"And Jack and I'll carry things from the grocery, and play circus to keep 'em happy," said Teddy with a loving pat on Jack's head.

"We'll take our brooms and sweep the kitchen for poor Mrs. Mooney," said Kitty.

"Pry and I will dig weeds out of their potato patch," was Arthur's resolution.

So one by one thought of some little

service, and Mrs. Spring told them that was the surest way to help anybody, and promised that she would make Mrs. Mooney her especial charge.

The month that followed was a very busy one, and it was not long before everyone in town knew about the Circle and what it was doing.

Mr. MacDuff, the man who raised strawberries for the city market, never had such an army of eager applicants for berry picking.

Mrs. Doty, the baker's wife, said it was astonishing how easy it was to get boys to deliver goods this summer. There was always someone around waiting for the commission, "and such bright-faced, polite little fellows they are, too," she added. She did not know about the Circle when she said this.

"It makes a big difference," Mrs. Doty went on to her customer, "about the kind of face that goes with the eat-

ables. If a boy looks ugly and sour when he takes bread around, it 'most sours the bread, I think."

So the talk went on and the influence of Teddy's motto, "I want to love the good," which was really at the bottom of all this, grew wider and deeper as the days went by.

Many a time Mr. Hale, the grocer, wiped a suspicious moisture out of his eyes, and racked his brains to find some new work for Teddy and Jack to do. Willie Morris and Donald, too, came in for a share of his patronage, for boys who had such a motto, Mr. Hale argued to himself, were the very boys that ought to be encouraged.

The girls, too, were favored here and there, even little Ruth finding her part in the great work of serving for love's sake.

CHAPTER XIV.

At last the month was up.

"Now, my dears," began Mrs. Spring, when they had all gathered and settled themselves in a waiting row of expectancy on the grass under the big elm, "you must be perfectly satisfied with whatever you have earned, whether it be much or little. If you have done your best in your efforts, it is that which counts rather than the amount. We will begin now and tell how we earned our money, and see how much we have. Willie, you may speak first."

A little sewing table in front of Mrs. Spring was the receiver of the offerings. Willie stepped up and laid a new silver dollar on it.

"You see," he began, "at first I didn't know what to do. I asked mamma, but she told me I ought to think of a way

myself. So I thought and thought, and two days went by. At last I went down to Blue Pond with the long-handled rake, where our ducks go so much, and I raked as far as I could reach, all around the edge, and I found nine duck's eggs—big dark-blue eggs, so I knew the ducks laid 'em. Mamma always used to give me a cent apiece for all I could find, and this time she gave me two cents apiece, so I had eighteen cents. Then for the rest I carried milk for our next-door neighbor, worked for Mr. Hale, sold some water lilies to a lady that lives in the city, and the last quarter papa paid me for pasting fifty scraps into his scrapbook without soiling the book."

Willie sat down amid admiring glances and muffled giggles of anticipation.

The ice was broken and every tongue loosed.

Marcia Bean had made fourteen iron-

holders, twelve of which she sold for a church fair. She had staid at home five afternoons to take care of her sister's baby, cleaned lamp-chimneys and washed windows for her mother, and she had just a dollar and thirty-nine cents to hand in.

Charley Barber and Arthur had combined forces for a part of their earnings. They had picked up old iron to sell, for which they had received twenty-one cents. On Saturday afternoons they had also kept a lemonade stand on the road to Bass Point, where they sold peanuts and lemonade to many pleasure seekers, who patronized them quite liberally on reading the motto on the little white tent; for Charley had insisted that if the motto had done so much good for each of them, it surely would to everyone who saw it; so "**I want to love the good**" had been printed in bold, black ink right over the tent door.

Charley modestly reported these doings of the two of them, and laid upon the table two dollars and forty-five cents.

Everyone was still as a mouse when little Ruth got up, and with downcast eyes and one finger in her mouth, said: "I'se got seventeen cents, cause papa said if I'd go to bed alone for a whole week that would be ten, 'n' I give'd back the candy he brought me ('n' he said that was selling it) so he paid me ten cents more. Here's all I've got." She laid two silver dimes on the table, then hastened to lay her prettiest doll in its prettiest dress on top. "For Lizbeth Ann," she whispered, and then ran to hide her face in her mother's lap.

There was a still time then. Nobody said a word, but Mamma Spring's eyes looked to be full of tears, and when she spoke her voice had a tremble in it.

"Ruth did not know this was only a

money gift day, but we will let the doll go to Lizbeth Ann since she wishes it."

A sudden sobbing interrupted the meeting at this point. It was Mollie.

"I didn't know what to do, so I haven't got anything. I — I'd like to — perhaps — they'd like Maltie."

"Never mind, dearie," said Mrs. Spring soothingly. "It's not too late yet. Keep up your courage and some opportunity will come, and because you're willing to give up Maltie your love will do in her place."

And then mamma told the beautiful Bible story of Abraham and Isaac, and explained about the nobleness of sacrifice, and how Abraham shows what it means to have unselfish love for right, no matter what it costs, and that after all it is the spirit of love in the giving or doing that makes it valuable. Then she told Mollie to come the next day and she would hire her to do some work.

Kittie's report was that she had picked seventeen quarts of strawberries for Mr. MacDuff, sorted and counted eggs in Mr. Hale's store, and carried milk every morning to Mrs. Simpson. Her earnings were ninety-seven cents.

And now it was Teddy's turn.

"Well, you see, Jack and I have a workshop. We went in there one day to think what we could do, and we thought of match-scratchers, so we made some. Jack sat by and watched, and I worked. We had to buy some sandpaper, but papa let me have the wood, so that didn't cost anything. We sold nine at five cents apiece, and have nine more to sell. We picked berries, too, and worked for Mrs. Doty, and here's what we've made." He laid one dollar and thirty-five cents on the table.

Then the five new boys who had joined the Circle, one after another, told

how they had picked berries, carried bread for Mrs. Doty, and done all sorts of errands in order to add to the money fund. Their joint efforts resulted in four dollars and twenty cents.

After a few minutes' general shouting and clapping of hands, Mrs. Spring called for order and said Marcia Bean would count it.

The amount was $11.56. How their eyes sparkled when they heard this. What a glow warmed their hearts when they saw this proof of their willing service and well-spent time. Then there was the doll for Lizbeth Ann.

"Now what'll we do?" asked several eager voices, when the noise had subsided a little. Then it was arranged that Mrs. Spring should buy what clothes the children really needed, and that the little school started by Willie Morris for Lizbeth Ann and Josephine should be enlarged to take in the rest of the chil-

dren, who had been obliged to drop out of school, and that the Crystal Truth Circle should take upon itself the task of helping them to catch up in their lessons until they could enter school in the fall as though they had never missed a day.

"There's a good chance to teach them about our motto and what it means, too," said Teddy bashfully.

"I've worked a motto for them and it's hanging up on the door now," added Marcia Bean, "and they all say it together every time they eat."

"'Course they'll be in our Circle, too," said Willie. "Why, Lizbeth Ann was naughty one day 'cause she wouldn't say A, an' I told her to say 'I want to love the good' as many times as I had fingers, an' she did, and after that was as good as pie."

"Oh, my! It's lots nicer to have something to do than nothing," said

Marcia Bean, unconsciously expressing the feeling of everybody.

After a few games on the lawn and a parting tag, the Circle dispersed for that day.

CHAPTER XV.

About this time the birds had so many tree picnics, and the bees so many flower festivals, that the Crystal Truth Seekers concluded to have some kind of a merry-making, too, so the cunningest little notes of invitation were written, with the motto, "I want to love the good" printed in gold ink in the upper left-hand corner, and (Mrs. Spring had done that) "Bring your pets" written in a very scrawly handwriting in a very black ink in a lower right-hand postscript. Teddy had done that. After his mother had finished writing the notes, she had gone out, leaving Teddy to seal them, and at the very last moment he had added this postscript, having forgotten to remind his mother to do it, as they had both agreed he should do.

Well, the result was, that at the appointed hour, under the big elm tree in Mrs. Spring's front yard, there was gathered the merriest, prettiest, you might say, the queerest picnic crowd you ever saw.

Besides boys and girls with shining eyes and rosy cheeks, with breeze-blown hair and smiling lips, there were two dogs (one big and one little one), four kittens, two white rabbits, a white mouse, a bushy-tailed squirrel, a very green parrot, who talked a great deal too much to be called well bred, three canaries, and three very smartly dressed, prettily behaved dolls, who minded their mother's directions to be seen and not heard (that is, if their mothers had told them. I don't know whether they had or not.)

The long table, covered with a snowy cloth, fairly creaked with delight that it could hold such a feast as was spread for

the happy guests. A great pyramid of scarlet strawberries stood in the center, flanked on either side by pink and yellow mounds of ice cream, and snow-crowned cakes waiting for some skilful hand to divide their sweetness, roses in big vases, in little vases and buttonhole bouquets graced the whole snowy length of the table, and, oh, dear, I cannot begin to tell you all, but just imagine if you can, what a lovely scene it was when everything was ready and the call came for "Dinner!"

Did everybody rush and scramble to get the best seat at that beautiful table? No, indeed! Among other things, these Crystal Truth Seekers were learning how to put selfishness out of their table manners, as well as all other manners they happened to have.

First in the procession that marched to the table, came Charley Barber and Teddy in regular marching order.

(Crutches? No, Charley never used crutches now.)

Then Jack alone, followed by Arthur and Pry, then Donald and Kitty, Mollie and Willie Morris, Marcia Bean and little Ruth, then the whole family of six delighted Mooneys in new clothes and brand new hats, with Lizbeth Ann and the twins proudly marching in the rear, each and all in the whole company wearing the yellow bag badge, and all who could, carrying the crystal ball in their hands. They took their appointed places, and Presto! everything was ready.

Where were the kittens and birds?

Each kitten was tied by a long string to the chair of her mistress, the rabbits were asleep in the patch of clover nearby, the white mouse dozed in his cage, and Polly with her stand very near the head of the table mingled her remarks with the merry laughter of the children,

greatly to their delight. The canaries in their cages hung on the branches of the tree and sang their sweetest songs during the whole feast. Frisk, the squirrel, was given a dinner of peanuts, which he ate very daintily and with evident relish. The dolls had to wait for the second table, but were very good-natured, and leaned against the tree as prim as you please.

Teddy, with Jack at his right hand, but a little back, sat at the head of the table. As host he was expected to make a little speech, and had learned something with slight alterations from the old reader he had found up in the garret one day.

He stood up, and cleared his throat, ready to begin. Presently he cleared his throat again. "Friends, and——" he began.

"Polly wants a cracker!" interrupted the parrot, who, as before hinted, was not very well bred.

"Friends and ——" began Teddy again, clearing his throat for the third or fourth time.

"Meow!" said Maltie under Mollie's chair.

Teddy was getting desperate. Why didn't he sit down and give up the speech?

No, indeed! Not when he had made up his mind it was right to make it. What he started to do, he was determined to finish.

"Friends and — well, all of you, I'm glad we're Crystal Truth Seekers, I'm glad Charley is well, I'm glad you're all here, and glad you brought the pets!"

"**W-h-e-w!** Polly's feet are cold!" screamed the illmannered bird, and the whole table was in a gale of laughter. Even the cups and spoons tried to dance a jig.

"Three cheers for the Crystal Truth Seekers!" proposed Arthur Brown, when they were still once more.

Three long and hearty cheers were given, and then followed three for Charley Barber, who stood up and bowed, and said "thank you" in a very shaky voice. Then three cheers were given for Jack and Teddy, "'cause they thought of all this first," added Mollie, not noticing Maltie slyly creeping into her lap under the tablecloth.

"Hurrah for Jack and Teddy!" rung loud and long from eager throats.

"Hurrah, hurrah, for the flag that makes us free!" sung Polly at the top of her voice.

And so the feast begun.

And the story of Teddy is done.

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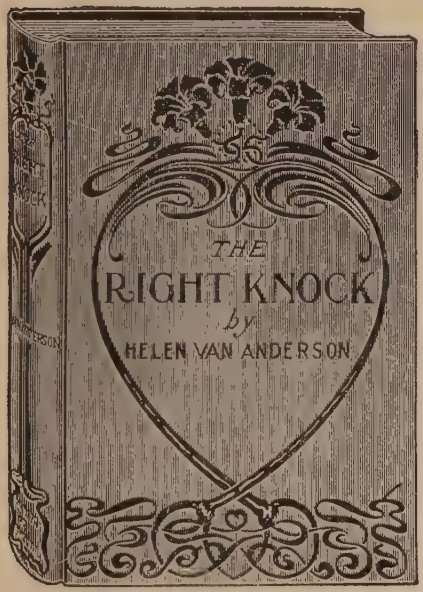

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